



**OFFICE OF
BAY COUNTY EXECUTIVE**

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PRESS RELEASE

TO: ALL MEDIA
FROM: Jim Barcia, Bay County Executive
DATE: December 22, 2021
RE: EMAIL SECURITY INCIDENT – NOTICE TO RESIDENTS

Last week, Bay County experienced an IT security incident relating to its email server. Upon discovery, we immediately initiated a comprehensive response including taking our network offline, and engaging independent IT security and computer forensic specialists to help us remediate and investigate the incident. We also reported the incident to law enforcement and are sharing information with them. Bay County completed a vigorous digital forensic investigation on our entire network and there have been no threats detected outside of our email system. Bay County's email system remains shut down as we complete the remediation.

It has come to our attention that suspicious emails have been sent to the public and others that we work with in our community. **DO NOT OPEN EMAILS OR CLICK ON ANY LINKS FROM BAY COUNTY UNTIL THE COUNTY EMAIL RESUMES OPERATION.** Please use an abundance of caution if you receive an email from a contact from Bay County as there have been reports of emails that appear to be from the County, but are not. Please be aware of this kind of "spoofing" of County email accounts/names. Review the email address carefully before opening any email from your County contact over the coming weeks.

As this process progresses and once our email system is clean and secure, Bay County will inform the public via our Facebook page when email is restored. Although our investigation is ongoing, at this time we have no evidence that anyone's confidential information has been misused as a result of this incident.

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